

Topic: San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site:

- In the mid-1960s, these former waste pits were used for disposal of paper mill wastes containing dioxins and furans. The waste pits are located adjacent to the San Jacinto River at the I-10 Bridge in Channelview, TX. Since the pits were constructed, the pit area has subsided and the river has eroded the outer berm allowing the pits to become partially submerged under water. Pursuant to a Consent Order with EPA, the Potentially Responsible parties placed a 14-acre armor cap over the waste pits in 2011 until a final remedy can be selected and implemented. The armor cap protects the waste material from erosion by the river (100-year flood design) and prevents human/fish/crab contact with the waste material. It is expected that a final long-term remedy for the site will be selected later this year by EPA in consultation with TCEQ after a public meeting and comment period.
- To facilitate and coordinate community involvement activities, the EPA co-leads a site ***Community Advisory Committee***, which includes the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Harris County, the Port of Houston, Houston Galveston Area Council, the Galveston Bay Foundation, recently community representatives, and the Potentially Responsible Parties. The community group meets regularly to review and share information on site cleanup issues and community involvement. The group also has conducted a series of community meetings.
- Harris County's lawsuit concerning the waste pits was concluded in November 2014. The lawsuit claimed that the companies abandoned the pits and allowed them to leak into the San Jacinto River for decades. A settlement was reached with two of the defendants, Waste Management of Texas, Inc., and McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corporation, who will pay \$29.2 million to settle the case. There was not any penalty assessed against the other defendant, International Paper Company.

Also, FYI, here are several R6 success stories from the “Aim High” campaign:

Environmental Education: In partnership with the Perot Museum of Nature and Science, EPA Region 6 is working to encourage and promote environmental education and outreach through educational programs and activities for parents, teachers and children in the Dallas area. The program has so far provided a number of well attended webcasts that drew students from Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Wisconsin, and New York and provided information to enhance understanding of environmental issues and challenges, environmental careers and other STEM topics. EPA and the Perot Museum are planning additional webcasts and public programming, including a Sun Wise training for teachers and an earth science event for children that will feature an astronaut and EPA scientists.

Water Quality Modeling: Water quality models provide a way to evaluate environmental impacts on water. Region 6 has made great strides in establishing a modeling center of expertise, with the intention of becoming a resource for federal and state water quality practitioners.



9674437

Region 6 has invested in a top flight computer that currently houses the latest in modeling software and tools. Also, in the fall of 2013, Region 6 hosted its first ever Water Quality Modeling Conference and Workshop, which brought together participants from all Region 6 states, as well as nationally recognized experts. The establishment of the modeling center not only expands Region 6's in-house modeling capacity, it provides a resource for states and other regions to improve water quality.

Enforcement: In June 2013 the City of Port Arthur, TX held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Westside Community Health Clinic. The construction of the clinic was funded by Valero as a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP). The SEP was part of a 2007 settlement agreement between Valero and EPA to resolved Clean Air Act (CAA) violations at Valero's Port Arthur, TX refinery. United States, et al. v. The Premcor Refining Group, Inc., et al., No. SA-07-CA-0683-RF (W. D. Tex.). Valero funded the Clinic from a \$1 million SEP designed for the diagnosis and treatment of asthma, respiratory, cardio-pulmonary, or other illnesses that may be caused or exacerbated by exposure to air pollutants. SEPs further EPA's goals of improving, protecting and reducing risks to public health or the environment.